



OPERATIONAL FRAMEWORK

Summary of Commission Charge

The charge of the California Blue Ribbon Commission on Children in Foster Care is to provide recommendations to the Judicial Council of California on the ways in which the courts and their partners can improve safety, permanency, well-being, and fairness outcomes for children and families.

The commission focused its recommendations in three key areas:

- The role of the courts in achieving improved outcomes for children and families
- Court collaboration with partner organizations and agencies
- Funding and resource options for child welfare services and the courts

Commission Outcomes

The commission seeks to achieve the following outcomes as a result of its work:

- A comprehensive set of politically viable recommendations for how courts and their partners can improve child welfare outcomes, including an implementation plan with key milestones
- Improved court performance and accountability in achieving child welfare outcomes of safety, permanency, well-being and fairness
- Improved collaboration and communication between courts, child welfare agencies, and others, including the institutionalization of county commissions that support ongoing efforts
- Increased awareness of the role of the courts in the foster-care system and the need for adequate and flexible funding

Commission Principles and Values

The commission believes that:

- All children are equal and deserve a safe and permanent home
- Efforts to improve the foster-care system must focus on improving safety, permanency, well-being, and fairness outcomes for children, and services should be integrated and comprehensive
- Collaboration is essential for achieving the best possible outcomes for children and families
- Courts play an important statutory role in overseeing children, families, and services in the dependency system. Children and families should have a say in decisions that affect their lives
- Government agencies need adequate and flexible funding to provide the best outcomes for children in the foster-care system

The commission's values:

- Collaboration
- Shared responsibility
- Accountability

- Leadership
- Children and families
- Child safety
- Inclusion
- Permanency
- Youth voice

Commission Subcommittees

Four subcommittees supported the work of the commission and helped develop recommendations for the commission's consideration. The subcommittees and their areas of focus included:

- **Court Oversight**—Issues related to policies and procedures in the trial and appellate courts and the overall role of the juvenile court in the child welfare system.
- **Funding and Resources**—Measures to ensure that adequate resources are available to reach the goals for families set by the courts, child welfare agencies, and the commission.
- **Accountability for Better Outcomes**—Current and future initiatives to ensure accountability by courts and agencies throughout the foster-care system on both the local and state levels.
- **Case Management and Data Exchange Systems**—Case management and data needs in courts and agencies and effective communication and sharing of data between systems.